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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Reverend Jeff C. Hudson, Senior Pastor, Fredericktowne Baptist Church, Frederick, Maryland, offered the following prayer:

Our God, we acknowledge that there is none like You. You alone are all-powerful. You alone are all-knowing. You alone are present everywhere at the same time. You alone are God.

As we approach the remembrance of the tragedy of 9-11, we are reminded of all that You have done for us as a Nation this past year. You have caused us to turn to You in a time of crisis. You have brought us to our knees and we have cried out to You. You have reminded us of our Heritage that we are one Nation under God.

May that truth guide the Members of the House today as they lead our Nation, and may they acknowledge that You are the sovereign Lord of our Nation. Grant them wisdom to know what they must do. Grant them courage to do what is right. May You be honored in this place today. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SCHAFER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SCHAFER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOME TO THE REVEREND JEFF C. HUDSON

(Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge and thank my constituent, Pastor Jeff Hudson of the Fredericktowne Baptist Church in Walkersville, Maryland, for offering today's opening prayer.

A graduate of the Washington Bible College and Capital Bible Seminary, Reverend Hudson is the senior pastor at Fredericktowne Baptist Church. He has served for more than 20 years. He and his wife Brenda have 2 teenage sons, Joshua and Nathan.

Pastor Hudson's invocation of God's presence in our lives continues an unbroken tradition of an Opening Prayer for the Congress. At age 81, and at a moment of deadlock during the Constitutional Convention, Benjamin Franklin said, "I have lived, sir, a long time. And the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth, that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that a new Nation can rise without his aid? I therefore beg leave to move that henceforth, prayers imploring the assistance of heaven and its blessings on our deliberations be held in this assembly every morning before we proceed to any business."

Thanks to Mr. Franklin, Congress still does this.

GIVE THE PRESIDENT THE TOOLS HE NEEDS

(Mr. FOLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, as we head to the final stretch of the 107th Congress, much remains to be done. The presidential want-to-bes spend a lot of time on the Sunday talk shows in hair

and makeup articulating what their vision is for homeland security. Well, there happens to be a bill authored by our President, passed by this House, that languishes over on the other side of this building. I urge my colleagues and I urge all of those paying attention, as we come upon the September 11 anniversary where 3,000-plus lives were lost in our country, that we focus our energies and our resolve on protecting our homeland.

The President has a prescription to make America safe, and I urge the other Chamber to act upon that vision. We cannot do this alone. The House has tried. Fifty-five-plus bills remain stalled over on the desk of the majority leader of the United States Senate, and I ask and I implore someone who is listening to my voice to urge action, to urge debate, to urge passage of this vital legislation to protect this country and give the President the tools and the powers he needs.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin). The Chair reminds Members that they are not to urge action or characterize inaction by the other body.

SUPPORT THE NATIONAL AMBER ALERT NETWORK ACT

(Mr. LAMPSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, in 1997 I established the Congressional Missing and Exploited Children's Caucus to provide a unified and loud voice for missing children advocates within Congress. The gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY) and 157 other Members work with me in this caucus today. While the caucus works to advance child safety legislation, we are also initiating

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community, State and national efforts to fight against the exploitation and abduction of our children.

One of those community initiatives is a successful and effective way to combat child abduction and it is called Amber Alert. The Amber Alert is named after Amber Hagerman, a 9-year-old girl who was tragically abducted and murdered in Arlington, Texas in 1996. The tragedy was felt throughout North Texas, and it led to a search for new and innovative community responses to help law enforcement officials find missing children.

That response is the Amber Alert, and it has frequently been successful in recovering missing children. We have been reading about it in our news media in just recent weeks.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of our Members to take the opportunity to join with us to make this a successful nationwide program, to join me in supporting the Frost-Dunn National Amber Alert Network Act. The National Amber Alert Network Act is a common sense approach to the problem of child abduction. Child abduction is finally receiving the attention it deserves. Let us take this opportunity to bring legislation to the floor that all of America can be proud of.

CONGRATULATIONS TO PRESIDENT BUSH

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the President on his reaching out to Congress to seek our assent over any Iraq action. The President will also meet with Prime Minister Blair and communicate with the U.N. Our leaders here in Congress were also briefed yesterday. We all know that Saddam is developing nuclear weapons. The President is reaching out to Putin of Russia, Jemin of China, and Chirac of France. He is doing the right thing.

There may be a vote here on the House floor in about 4 to 5 weeks on this action. Congress will be consulted and the President is building a consensus. We will debate the question, the simple question: Is inaction an option or not? Should we force weapons inspections as a means of building this international coalition to act against Iraq? Saddam has had 11 long years in which he has sidestepped and crawlished on allowing us to inspect. Should there be a consensus first before we inspect?

Mr. Speaker, all of these questions are healthy in the debate here in Congress, and I congratulate the President in reaching out to the public and to Congress and to have this important debate.

WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

(Mr. ALLEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I have returned from Johannesburg, South Africa where I attended the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The summit produced some achievements such as the agreement to improve water and sewer sanitation in the Third World. The U.S. delegation also successfully promoted public-private partnerships to solve some environmental problems. But when it came to climate change, it had no interest in partnerships.

The Bush administration stands alone in refusing to deal with global warming. As a former executive, President Bush knows that no business plan will succeed without targets and timetables, yet the President's negotiators succeeded in blocking targets and timetables to reduce the use of oil and gas and increase the use of renewable energy.

The goal of the summit was to implement a vision for a healthier and more sustainable future, but it fell short because the Bush administration has no vision beyond short-term gains for the oil and gas industry.

The U.S. risks falling behind our competitors who will develop innovative and profitable clean and efficient technologies. For the sake of our economy and our health, I urge the administration to abandon its ideological resistance to real action against climate change.

HEWLETT PACKARD'S GIVE THANKS AMERICA INITIATIVE

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, as we approach the first anniversary of one of the most tragic days in our Nation's history, our attention obviously goes to those who lost their lives and their loved ones, but we also have a renewed focus on the men and women in uniform, the first responders, policemen, firefighters, medical technicians, and also our men and women in uniform who are deployed overseas.

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These people have dedicated their lives to protect our freedoms, and they put their safety on the line every day without any expectation of recognition.

To acknowledge the service of our public safety and military personnel, Hewlett-Packard created the "Give thanks, America" initiative, which allows families of military personnel and the general public to send video e-mail messages of appreciation to these heroes.

To date, tens of thousands of Americans have participated in this effort. Tomorrow at the Pentagon an interactive kiosk will be dedicated as a permanent exhibit, allowing service members, family members, and visitors the

opportunity to join in showing their deep gratitude and faith to our military personnel.

I congratulate all those associated with this very important program for pursuing this.

EDUCATION

(Mr. SCHAFER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHAFER. Mr. Speaker, most children in America are back in school this week, and parents in most areas have been provided more information about their schools and their child's academic performance than ever before.

Earlier this year, Education Secretary Rod Paige talked about the need for more education options. He said, "The new annual tests will provide parents with much more information about the quality of their children's schools, but if parents can't act on that information, they can't really hold their schools accountable, and the schools will not have a real incentive to improve."

This week, the Committee on Ways and Means, in fact today, will pass the Back-to-School Tax Relief Act that gives parents options to act on the information about the quality of their child's school. The bill gives low-income parents an above-the-line tax deduction of up to \$3,000 for almost any educational expense, including tutoring and tuition at private schools.

Parents deserve this freedom. They deserve the freedom to act in the best interests of their kids. As America's elementary and secondary students go back to school this month, I urge Congress to quickly pass the Back-to-School Tax Relief Act, H.R. 5193.

A TIME FOR EVERY PURPOSE

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, the Good Book tells us that there is a time for every purpose under heaven. There is a time to weep and a time to mourn, and tomorrow I will join some 250 of my colleagues in this body as we travel to Federal Hall in New York City to do just that. We will gather at a place that this Congress met and even adopted the Bill of Rights in the year 1789, and we will mourn with those who mourn, and we will weep with those who weep.

The last time I was in New York City, Mr. Speaker, was September 21. I stood in the ashes and on the periphery of the devastation at Ground Zero, and I expect tomorrow, as we all do, to be a deeply moving day emotionally.

But as we join to pray, let us ever remember that also we are told that there is a time for peace, but there is a time for war. As we pray for the bereaved, let us also pray for wisdom for